



Charter Review Committee Recommendations

Background

- August 2023: Two-Minute Pitch
- December 2023: Council provided approval to move forward with a Charter Review Committee and Charter Amendment Election.
- January 2024: Council provided direction on the timeline and makeup of the Charter Review Committee.
- February – May 2024: Council provided direction on the content of the Charter Review Committee charges through five work sessions.
- June 2024: Council approves creation of the Charter Review Committee and issued charges for the committee to review.
- July – November 2024: Charter Review Committee considered the committee charges and provided recommendations on each item through eight meetings.

Overview

- Staff will present the committee's recommended Charter Amendments, proposed ballot language, and financial impact estimate of each item.
- Seeking direction on the recommendations. If there are any modifications to the recommendations or outstanding items, they will be presented at the December 17 Work Session.
- Council direction will inform the final ballot language and calling of the election through ordinance at the January 14 Council Meeting.
- **Council Rules of Procedure 2-29 Part (i) Section (1)(a):**
Charter amendment—Five (5) votes: Ordinances submitting proposed Charter amendments must be adopted by a two-thirds ($\frac{2}{3}$) vote of the council.

Committee Process

- The Charter Review Committee held eight meetings between July and November 2024.
- The Committee reviewed each charge put forward by Council with a staff presentation, committee discussion, and recommendation vote.
- Per the enacting and charging resolution, all recommendations brought forward by the committee required an eight-person majority.
- Charge K enabled the committee to review additional items not included in the charges.
 - The committee submitted and considered several additional items.
 - The last recommendation is an additional item that received consensus to put forward as a recommendation.



Committee Recommendations

Charter-Perfecting Charges

Exhibit 2: Summary and explanation of the proposed changes

- A. Resolve conflicts with state law
- B. Resolve vague or unclear language
- C. Replace gendered language with non-gendered language

Proposed ballot language:

Shall the City Charter be amended to resolve conflicts with state law and modify vague or unclear language? (combined charges A and B)

Shall the City Charter be amended to replace all instances of gendered language with non-gendered language?

D. Modify the mix of single and at-large districts

F. Additional Council seats based on population size and estimated growth

The Committee recommends amending the Charter to convert the Council from four single-member geographical districts, two at-large districts, and an at-large mayor to eight single-member geographical districts and the mayor elected at-large. (8-4)

Ballot Language:

Shall the City Charter be amended to convert the Council from four (4) single-member geographical districts, two (2) at-large districts, and an at-large mayor to eight (8) single-member geographical districts and the mayor elected at-large?

Financial Impact Estimate (Exhibit 3):

The City of Denton estimates the implementation of the proposition would have a financial impact of \$284,105 - \$584,105 for implementation and \$109,679 annually.

*If Council moves forward with this item, implementation will be discussed at the Dec. 17 meeting.

E. Increase the Council term to 3 or 4 years

- The Committee recommends not increasing to the two-year Council term to either a three or four-year term. (10-1)
- No ballot language.
- No financial impact.

G. Modify the Mayor and Council stipend

The Committee recommends modifying the Mayor and Council stipend to provide for an annual increase to the Mayor and Council stipend based on the annual cost of living increase given to city employees with a stipend increase cap of no more than the previous year's consumer price index (CPI). (10-3)

- Clarification: Should CPI be less than the city employees' cost-of-living adjustment (COLA), the stipend increase should reflect the employee COLA rate or CPI?

Ballot language:

Shall the City Charter be amended to provide for an annual increase to the Mayor and Council member stipend equal to the annual cost of living increase given to city employees with a stipend increase cap of no more than the previous year's consumer price index (CPI)?

Financial Impact Estimate (Exhibit 3):

The City of Denton estimates the implementation of the proposition would have a financial impact of \$4,252.81 per year.

H. Require a statement less than 200 words on the grounds for removal for recall petitions

- The Committee recommends not requiring a statement less than 200 words on the grounds for removal for recall petitions. (11-2)
- No ballot language.
- No financial impact.

I. Increase the Municipal Judge term to 4 years

The Committee recommends increasing the term of the Municipal Judge from two years to four years. (8-4)

Ballot language:

Shall the City Charter be amended by adding a four-year appointment term for the Municipal Judge?

Financial Impact Estimate (Exhibit 3):

The City of Denton estimates the implementation of the proposition would have no significant financial impact.

J. Modify the Ethics Ordinance requirements

- The Committee recommends no modifications to the Ethics Ordinance requirements. (14-0)
- No ballot language.
- No financial impact.

K. Review additional sections not listed

The Committee recommends implementing a one-year residency requirement for individuals serving on all judicial and quasi-judicial citizen boards, committees, or commissions appointed by Council. (13-1)

- Board of Ethics, Civil Service Commission, Health & Building Standards Commission, Historic Landmark Commission, Planning & Zoning Commission, Zoning Board of Adjustment

Ballot language:

Shall the City Charter be amended to require members of judicial or quasi-judicial boards and commissions be domiciled in the City one year prior to appointment?

Financial Impact Estimate (Exhibit 3):

The City of Denton estimates the implementation of the proposition would have a financial impact of \$4,760.00 for implementation and \$3,570 annually.

Next Steps

- Seek direction on the recommendations. If there are any modifications to the recommendations or outstanding items, they will be presented at the December 17 Work Session.
- Council direction will inform the final ballot language and calling of the election through ordinance at the January 14 Council Meeting.



Council Direction